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The Bomb The President Must De-fuse

In two recent speeches, President Kennedy has, we hope, begun the essential task of his Administration. This task is more important even than reaching a settlement with the Russians. The No. 1 task is to educate our own people to the realities of the world they face. In his address to the United Nations, the President put forward with Euclidean simplicity the basic axiom of our time, "Mankind must put an end to war, or war will put an end to mankind." In his address at Chapel Hill, he picked up the challenge of the rightists and the military when he warned against the illusion of "total victory or total defeat," the hysteria about being dead or Red. But Mr. Kennedy will have to develop these themes in a great campaign of public education if he is to fulfil the pledge he made at Chapel Hill, "while we do not intend to see the free world give up, we shall make every effort to prevent the world from being blown up." If this is to be more than rhetoric, he must begin with the most explosive element of all, that mixture of tension, arrogance, frustration and self-righteousness which threatens to detonate our own people. He must de-fuse American public opinion.

Beware the "Take-Off" Point

One of the President's aides, Prof. W. W. Rostow, has propounded a new concept in economic theory, the idea that at a certain point the economy of an underdeveloped country, fructified by sufficient investment, will reach the "take-off" point from which it can soar ahead on its own momentum. The same metaphor may usefully be applied to political theory. There comes a point in hostile relations between two rival nations when inflamed public opinion in one or the other or both may also reach a "take-off" point. This is the point where the tension built up in the people for purposes of bargaining and bluff gets out of hand, becomes unendurable, and sweeps the country into war—"let's get it over with." This rhythm of tension and resolution which runs deep in human nerve fibres, evident in love and in music, also makes itself felt in war hysteria, carrying away the governors in the mob rush of the governed for relief, though it be at the cost of self destruction. The press and the inflamed rhetoric do for the public what drums and drugs do for a primitive tribe: send them off to war in a frenzy. It is to combatting such a mood, already dangerously high, that the President must turn his attention.

This is a dangerous task. It requires skill and courage of the highest order. The President likes challenges. He will find none more exhiliratingly worthy of a young man's devoted best efforts. To admit that the nation's opponent, its rival, its enemy of the moment, is not the embodiment of all evil, is always a hazardous operation. But the premise of the delusion about total defeat or total victory, at which the President struck in Chapel Hill, is a total moral view of the conflict. It is the notion that all that is good is on our side, all that is evil on the other. Once that view is accepted, the death drive for total victory or total defeat is unavoidable. How can one compromise with total evil? The path to peace is the path of understanding that in the human tragedy good and evil are intertwined, that what looks like legitimate defense of one's interests from one side looks like an aggressive threat to one's interests from the other, that the enemy is our own distorted face in the mirror. To echo the safety sign, the face you hate may be your own. Those who call themselves Christian must recognize that their Gospel teaching springs from this compassionate and sorrowfully detached view of the real nature of human conflict. And since humanity can no longer afford

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German Propaganda At Work

Instead of preparing the German public for political realities, now that their elections are over, the German government has launched a propaganda campaign against Britain and the U.S. The independent German weekly, Der Spiegel, lifts the curtain on this in its issue of Oct. 11. One of the instruments being used is the "Society for Christian Social Teaching and Public Opinion Formation" in Bonn which is headed by the Christian Democratic leader Dr. Krone and is subsidized by tax favors as "gemeinnutzig" (socially beneficial). Its organ, "Politisch-Soziale Correspondenz" has just published three articles attacking the readiness of Americans and Englishmen to discuss recognition of the East German government, the Oder-Neisse line and the armament of the Bundeswehr. Senators Humphrey, Mansfield and Fulbright are special targets. Franz Joseph Strauss, whom Der Spiegel calls "Atom Matador," is playing a key role. His two press assistants, Col. Schmuckle and Major von Raven, have been spreading use-but-don't-quote-me alarms through the official German news agency to the effect that the Soviet satellites are already atomic-armed.

The German and French embassies in Washington are also spreading word that there are too many advisers around Kennedy "tainted" with anti-Germanism. Le Monde in a dispatch from Washington Oct. 14 reflects this. It puts George Kennan; Foy Kohler, Assistant Secretary of State for European Affairs; Llewellyn Thompson, Ambassador to Moscow; and Bohlen, McGeorge Bundy and Rostow in this group "espousing the theses of Walter Lippmann." On the other side Le Monde puts Dean Acheson and Paul Nitze, Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Security Affairs. It has become hazardous in Washington to be critical of Chiang Kai-shek. Is Bonn out to make it dangerous to criticize the Germans?

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Holifield, No. 1 Democratic Civil Defense Champion, Critical of Kennedy Plans

New Frontier's Backyard Shelters Another Case of "Warmed Over Eisenhower"

Liberal Democratic dissatisfaction with Kennedy broke out in a new area with Congressman Chet Holifield's speech to the U.S. Civil Defense Council in Los Angeles last Tuesday. Softly, timidly but unmistakably Mr. Holifield indicated that he had no faith in the Kennedy civil defense program. He predicted plans to mark existing shelter space in large city buildings would prove disappointing: "we will find less protection, less well distributed, than would constitute the very minimum of what can be called a national fallout shelter program." He was equally dubious of reliance on private shelters. He said, "Many individual families do not have the economic means. Tenants are not about to be building shelters for their landlords. In many parts of the country there are not enough basements or even backyard spaces for widespread family shelter construction." He indicated that he still favored a nationwide program of group shelters to cost somewhere in the neighborhood of $20 billion and to provide some protection against blast and fire as well as fallout. One of Holifield's scientific advisers, the physicist Ralph E. Lapp, was blunter in a speech on civil defense a few days earlier at Ford Hall Forum in Boston (Oct. 8) when he said it was "already clear" that the Kennedy Administration's policy on civil defense "is headed in the wrong direction."

Rich Man's Philosophy

The truth, as both men are fully aware, is that in no area of public policy is the New Frontier more clearly "warmed over Eisenhower" than in its civil defense program. No man in Congress understands this better than Mr. Holifield. As long time member and now chairman of the Joint Committee on Atomic Energy, he knows the dimensions of the thermonuclear peril. As chairman of the Military Operations subcommittee of House Government Operations, he has been campaigning since 1955 for a national shelter program. His efforts to rewrite the obsolete pre-H Bomb, pre-ICBM, Civil Defense Act of 1950, with its horse-and-buggy reliance on State, community and individual action, was blocked by Eisenhower and is still blocked under Kennedy. This is in accord with the basic rich man's philosophy of the GOP, which seeks to hold down Federal costs (largely financed by income taxes) at the expense of State and local governments (largely financed by general property and sales levies). Hence the emphasis on "States rights" and "local responsibility." Kennedy has also taken over Eisenhower's reliance on private shelters, again the big taxpayer's point of view, and Eisenhower's makeshift plan for utilizing supposed shelter space in existing buildings.

Shelter Business Mostly Talk

"If the Berlin crisis and the Soviet resumption of atmospheric nuclear tests have done nothing else, they have made the construction of fallout shelters a topic of lively interest throughout the U.S. . . . So far, though, comparatively little of the talk is being translated into action. Business Week reporters, asking questions in 20 cities, found that a few dealers are making sales. . . . But no groundswell of orders has appeared. . . . Even in the Miami area . . . a dealer complains that fallout shelters are the 'most talked about and least sold item.' . . ."

—Business Week, Oct. 7

The difference is that while Mr. Holifield spoke up with pungent scorn against this program when offered by Eisenhower, he now feels himself forced to speak under wraps. Little more than a year ago his subcommittee (Hse Rpt No. 2069, July 1, 1960) said the plan to mark existing spaces in big city buildings would only provide "an illusion of security" since the shielding thus offered would be quite inadequate for the fallout intensities to be expected. (Dr. Lapp was more outspoken; he said the program was based on the foolhardy assumption that cities would not be bombed and that it would therefore be safe to congregate the population in their downtown areas, the very place where blast and fire would be worst if cities were hit.) Of the private shelter program last year's report said angrily, "There is no sense in living in a world of make-believe. If the Federal government doesn't supply the funds and direct a construction program for communal shelters, there will be no national shelter program."

In continuing to propagate faith in civil defense against nuclear war, both these men also live in a world of make-believe. Dr. Lapp in his speech made the admission (see box below) that even the best civil defense could be effective only if the level of attack was below 7500 megatons. Attacks far heavier than this are already possible. The only defense now is to face the fact that there is no alternative to co-existence. But this remains too dangerous a thought. At Los Angeles, Mr. Holifield fell back on the melodramatic oversimplification that survival could not be achieved "through cowardly surrender to a ruthless enemy who plans to destroy our way of life." Such rhetoric is the real cowardice and the real betrayal.

Advocate of Civil Defense Admits Its Limit in Thermonuclear War

"An effective—not a perfect—civil defense can be devised for certain levels of attack. I do not subscribe to the fantasy advertised on the cover of LIFE that '97 out of 100 people can be saved.' . . . I believe that if the level of attack on the USA does not exceed 3,000 megatons, then an effective civil defense can be programmed. . . . The 3 million square miles of U.S. territory could absorb no more than 3 million kilotons of fission debris or 3,000 megatons. If we assume 40 percent of a total weapon yield for local fallout, the absorption capability of the U.S. would correspond to 7,500 megatons. . . .

"A single B-52 bomber can carry a bomb load of 48 megatons. With continued nuclear development, this bomb load could surpass 100 megatons. A nuclear strike with 100 B-52s—only a fraction of the total strategic power of the USA—could then unleash a total of 10,000 megatons. Thus, it is clear that for the first time in modern history man's power to destroy assumes continental dimensions."

—Dr. Ralph E. Lapp, Boston, Oct. 8.

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Why Not Negotiate With China Now, Rather Than After Much Lost Blood and Treasure?

Must We Repeat in South Vietnam the Follies of Korea and Laos?

On two occasions since 1950 the U.S. intervened in the countries bordering on China, and now we may be on the verge, as the Maxwell Taylor mission to South Vietnam indicates, of doing so again. The first occasion was in the Korean war, when, despite warnings from Peking through New Delhi, we crossed the 38th parallel and advanced to the Yalu. The result was that our armies were forced back to the 38th parallel, the old border between North and South Korea was restored, and we were forced to negotiate peace with China. The second occasion began last Fall when we upset the neutralist government of Souvanna Phouma, encouraged the rightist Phoumi Nosavan to revolt, and gave him arms and military advice. The result was his defeat, an increase in aid from North Vietnam to the pro-Communist Pathet Lao, a great expansion in the territory they held, the recognition by the Pentagon last January (before Kennedy took office) that it was folly to be drawn into a distant mountain jungle war over Laos, and again—negotiations with China. Souvanna Phouma is back in power, and our man Phoumi Nosavan will be back in his Cabinet, though in a less powerful post than he might have had last Fall.

Men Looking for Trouble

Now we're on the verge of direct intervention in South Vietnam. On the plane with General Taylor were an assorted bag of men looking for trouble. There was General Van Fleet, who told a visiting Filipino delegation to the Korean front in January 1952, "Korea has been a blessing. There had to be a Korea either here or some place in the world." Perhaps he hopes for a new Korea in South Vietnam. Another on the plane was Joseph Alsop, who has been dashing out to Southeast Asia every year, and announcing that "this is it," as the opening journalistic shot of a war that somehow never materializes. Then there is W. W. Rostow, an amateur enthusiast of anti-guerrilla tactics, the White House man with a private line to Fort Bragg, and Brig. Gen. E. G. Lansdale, reputed to be the "Quiet American" of Graham Greene's novel. He is now in Secretary McNamara's office as the highest military official for our new "jungle fighters" and paramilitary forces. The "cream" of this outfit was rushed out to South Vietnam last May with great fanfare but the guerrilla activities they were supposed to crush have grown since they arrived.

Diem, the South Vietnamese dictator, has had six years and $2 billion in U.S. aid without being able to win his people or build a viable regime. He has 150,000 soldiers and a 50,000-man constabulary but cannot cope with less than 15,000 guerrillas. There are three U.S. Generals and close to 1,000 U.S. soldiers trying to prop up Diem's army. To go in with U.S. troops is to repeat the tragic errors of France and invite war with China. The lessons of Korea and of Laos is that this will end, after much loss of life and treasure, in another negotiation with China—or a World War. Why not negotiate now, and provide the stable political framework in which the Diem regime can be reformed or a firm democratic substitute found for it?

What Monty Saw In China

"The Chinese people have been through a bad time during the past three years, due to a succession of bad harvests, but the Central Government in Peking is firmly in control. Talk of large-scale famine, of grim want, of apathy, of a restless nation, is nonsense. . . . I visited ten major cities and many other towns and villages. . . . I saw no case of malnutrition. . . . In 50 years China will be the most powerful nation in Asia, perhaps in the world. From the Western point of view it is the height of folly not to make friends with this great nation and to trade with it."

—Field Marshal Montgomery, reporting on his new trip to China in The Sunday Times (London), Oct. 15.

Marshal Chen Yi, China's Foreign Minister, Asks for Understanding in U.S.

"In Warsaw we are already having talks at the ambassadorial level. At Geneva we are talking at the level of deputy Foreign Ministers. If it is suggested that we talk at Foreign Ministers level we should have no objections. . . . China's attitude is that the U.S. must take the initiative in any new moves. . . . If the U.S. wants China to take the initiative, that means we must submit. We shall not. For the last 100 years we have been submitting too often. . . ."

Marshal Chen Yi predicted that unless there was a settlement in Laos there was a risk that war would spread in the area. . . . China's territorial security was involved there because Indochina was not a peninsula like Korea where a war could be contained. Marshal Chen Yi added that because of China's present agricultural and industrial difficulties there was apprehension in some quarters that she "might carry out some adventure in south-east Asia." This was groundless. The only way China could overcome her difficulties was through her own production. . . .

Mr. Cole said his travels throughout the world had convinced him of the deep-rooted fear and apprehension about China, particularly when she possessed atom bombs. This was especially true in the U.S.

Marshal Chen Yi said China realized there were such fears. "We acknowledge that atomic bombs are weapons which are much more effective for massacre. . . ." He said that China stood for banning nuclear weapons. . . . He said that apprehension in the U.S. about China did not arise from the question of her eventual possession of atomic weapons but from "distorted reports which describe China as very, very vicious, as advocating war as a way of settling disputes. . . . If the U.S. is apprehensive about China, it should put itself in the place of China. . . .

The Chinese people were afraid, for example, that the U.S. would use Formosa as a base to disrupt the country's socialist development. "We have a constant fear which we cannot relieve. U.S. military bases in Taiwan, Okinawa, Japan, South Korea, South Vietnam and the Philippines are all directed against China. How can we escape fear? The U.S. has nuclear weapons. We have none. . . ."

Referring to discussion about a seat for China in the UN, Marshal Chen Yi said there was a big loophole in American efforts to postpone China's seating for another year by labelling it an "important question." "By their own deeds they are showing that the UN cannot settle any important questions. All important questions will be vetoed in the UN. So people will naturally ask what is the use of the United Nations."

—Interview with Walton A. Cole of Reuters, reprinted here from The Times (London), Oct. 12.

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Only A More Mature View of An Ever More Unstable World Can Save Us

(Continued from Page One)

the spendid game of war, it is to just such fundamental perspectives that we must turn if we are to edge back from the brink. The President at Chapel Hill spoke of the need for men and women "willing to take the long view, undisturbed by prejudices and slogans of the moment." Dare he himself take it?

Still the Same Cold War Stereotypes

Yet Mr. Kennedy, even if he shows a capacity in private for this long view, is very far from acting upon it or expressing it in public. Except for the occasional hints about the East's genuine fears for their security in the German question, Mr. Kennedy cautiously remains attached to the politically safe black-and-white view of the world propagated by the government's multifarious agencies of propaganda since the cold war began. His principal answer to the opposition is to point, as he did at his last press conference, to the stepup since he took office in our military preparations. He speaks of defending national interest, but hesitates to say that our overriding national interest today is in peace itself. "Co-existence" remains a forbidden word in his vocabulary. How can the same man warn of universal cataclysm, of the next ten months deciding the fate of mankind for the next 10,000 years, as he did before the UN, and then boast at press conference that the output of M-14 rifles has been increased from 9,000 to 44,000 a month? What are those rifles for—World War IV, when we come up from the shelters? How can he talk as he did at Chapel Hill of the need for "national maturity" and lend himself to the wickedness of the campaign to assure the American people that by digging a hole in their backyards they can hide from the thermonuclear Apocalypse?

The secret of health, for nations as for men, is adjustment to change. Our domination of the world, which began with the fratricidal struggle of the European powers in World War I, is coming to an end. Russia will soon equal us in power, and China will later surpass both. A nationalist rising in the underdeveloped areas has brought a clamorous Third Force into the stale feud between capitalism and communism. There are instabilities everywhere which may at any moment dwarf the Berlin crisis. A revolution in Venezuela, the distintegration of the Congo, race war in South Africa, may panic us into war by chain reaction if the American people are not prepared to see beyond vastly oversimplified slogans and an unconscious national arrogance like that which swept the Kaiser's Germany to disaster because of an assassin's bullet in the then distant unstable Balkans. We have a proud and secure place in the world as the bearer of a great tradition; in the long run Jefferson will be a source of universal inspiration for youth even in the world recast by Lenin and especially in that world. But we are imprisoned against wise adjustment by our own vapid stereotypes, and by irreconcilable allied Canutes in the Far East and in West Germany. On the level of practical politics, the President must have the courage to strike out and develop a more mature American public opinion or be defeated by cries of appeasement when he brings home a peaceful settlement on Berlin. On the higher level, this is his chance for greatness, if war sooner or later is to be avoided.

Stop That 50-Megaton Monster

It seems to us the clear duty of the neutral nations at the UN immediately to sponsor an emergency resolution demanding that the Soviet Union call off the 50-megaton test Khrushchev has announced for Oct. 31. The best calculations at our U.S. radiation hearings in 1957 were that 10 megatons was about the safe annual limit for atmospheric explosions. The Russians have already set off about 10 megatons. Actually, as Dr. Ralph Lapp pointed out on a TV program last Sunday, Oct. 15, the northern latitudes get about ten times as much radiation from Russian tests in the Arctic as from American tests in the Pacific. He estimates that 3 megatons would be the safe annual limit for tests in the Arctic. The Russians have far exceeded these limits, and risk serious harm to their people (their press is still silent on their own tests) as well as others. In this connection we were immensely cheered by the report from Moscow in Le Monde (Oct. 10) which said that at the Soviet Poetry Day celebration, "free lance" poets gathered around the statue of the poet Mayakovsky and dared to read poems against nuclear explosions.

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